

To: Cheryl (Cheri) Vocelka[cvocelka@blm.gov]
From: Marci Todd
Sent: 2017-03-30T10:34:51-04:00
Importance: Normal
Subject: Fwd: revised: Briefing Memo(4) for Supplemental RMP, So.NV/GBNM
Received: 2017-03-30T13:09:10-04:00
[ATT00001.htm](#)
[briefing memo\(4\) So NV Supplemental RMP.docx](#)
[Briefing Paper\(2\) Departmental Nol So Nevada Suppl RMP.docx](#)
[ATT00002.htm](#)
[Nol SoNevada-GBNM Supplemental Draft RMP 1.9.17.docx](#)
[ATT00003.htm](#)

More for tomorrow; please ensure this updated memo is clearly marked. Thx M

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Pritchett, David" <dpritchett@blm.gov>
To: John Ruhs <jruhs@blm.gov>, Marci Todd <m1todd@blm.gov>
Cc: "Morales, Raul" <rmoreales@blm.gov>, "Cook, Christopher" <cjcook@blm.gov>, Kimberly Dow <kddow@blm.gov>, Stephen Clutter <sclutter@blm.gov>, Timothy Smith <tsmith@blm.gov>, Erick Kurkowski <ekurkowski@blm.gov>, James Kirk <jkirk@blm.gov>, Gayle Marrs-Smith <gmarrssm@blm.gov>
Subject: revised: Briefing Memo(4) for Supplemental RMP, So.NV/GBNM

per the email series below, WO Planning Division reviewed this Briefing Memo earlier today (Wed.) and Kirsten Bail also apparently read it and asked for enhanced discussion on Coop Agencies and Tribal coordination. I added that to the Briefing Memo(4) and just sent it up, per message forwarded here. They are going to jump on it Thursday morning (Eastern Time).

So attached are the same suite of documents for the Friday morning call with BLM Directorate (WO-100), with the new enhanced **Memo(4)** to replace the earlier one today. Joanne or Cheri to print here. SNDO included as CC to this message.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Pritchett, David** <dpritchett@blm.gov>
Date: Wed, Mar 29, 2017 at 5:57 PM
Subject: Re: Briefing Memo(4) for Supplemental RMP, So.NV/GBNM
To: Nathan Morris <namorris@blm.gov>
Cc: Stephanie Carman <scarman@blm.gov>, "Baker, Leah" <lbaker@blm.gov>, "Achet, Shiva" <sachet@blm.gov>, Kristin Bail <kbail@blm.gov>

Attached is the **revised version, file "briefing memo(4) So NV Supplemental RMP"** [can replace "memo(3)" sent up earlier today].
The *Briefing Paper Departmental* already was sent up earlier today as well.

This revision attached includes the micro-edits (by Stephanie Carman?) and includes a new sub-section (2 paragraphs) requested by Kristin Bail about the Cooperating Agencies, highlighting which agencies they are, and their inputs that informed on the need for a Supplemental RMP, plus mention of a new Coop Agency, the water district that includes the northern portion of Gold Butte National Monument.

I will forward this message and the revised Memo(4) to Nevada State Director (John Ruhs) and others at BLM-Nevada, for his call with WO-100 on Friday morning.

--David Pritchett, NVSO Planning Program Lead

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Carman, Stephanie" <scarman@blm.gov>
Date: March 29, 2017 at 5:14:00 PM EDT
To: "Morris, Nathan" <namorris@blm.gov>
Cc: "Baker, Leah" <lbaker@blm.gov>, "Achet, Shiva" <sachet@blm.gov>
Subject: Re: Briefing Memo etc. for Supplemental RMP, SNDO/GBNM

A couple questions from Kristin, if you could put it in the briefing paper:
cooperating agencies? county and state input so far (Las Vegas)?
Other Tribal input, in addition to Moapa solar?

the most recent versions are attached, a few minor edits.

Stephanie Carman
Acting WO200 Resource Adviser 3/27 3/31

National Program Lead
Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Program
Bureau of Land Management
(202) 912 7169 office
(202) 841 5904 cell
scarman@blm.gov

On Wed, Mar 29, 2017 at 3:31 PM, Morris, Nathan <namorris@blm.gov> wrote:

Stephanie,

Attached are the briefing materials for the meeting this Friday regarding the **Southern Nevada Supplemental RMP**.

Please let me know if you have any questions or need anything else.

Nathan

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Pritchett, David** <dpritchett@blm.gov>
Date: Wed, Mar 29, 2017 at 3:20 PM
Subject: Fwd: Briefing Memo etc. for Supplemental RMP, SNDO/GBNM
To: "Morris, Nathan" <namorris@blm.gov>

see attachments, as we discussed this morning.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Pritchett, David** <dpritchett@blm.gov>
Date: Wed, Mar 29, 2017 at 12:20 PM
Subject: Briefing Memo etc. for Supplemental RMP, SNDO/GBNM
To: John Ruhs <jruhs@blm.gov>, Marci Todd <m1todd@blm.gov>
Cc: "Cook, Christopher" <cjcook@blm.gov>, Timothy Smith <tsmith@blm.gov>,
Erick Kurkowski <ekurkowski@blm.gov>, Stephen Clutter
<sclutter@blm.gov>, Joanne Maluotoga <jmaluoto@blm.gov>

Attached for the Friday morning call with WO-100. I also am forwarding now to our WO Planning Division (WO-212) contact, Nathan Morris there.

Briefing Memo is the detailed, updated, reformatted description of the what and why for the NoI publication (includes maps).

Briefing Paper Departmental is the form for ASLM review there.

NoI is the Notice of Intent doc as currently residing in the DTS tracking.

Printed package of all this to be here at NVSO desks via Joanne here.

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Briefing Paper
Departmental Clearance

Title of Document: **Notice of Intent to Prepare a Supplement to the Draft Resource Management Plan and Associated Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Southern Nevada District Planning Area, comprising the Las Vegas and Pahrump Field Offices and Gold Butte National Monument**

RIN, if applicable: [Click here](#) to enter a RIN, if applicable.

Popular Short Name, if applicable: Southern Nevada Supplemental RMP

Summary (Clearly and very briefly explain what the document does and, if applicable, where the subject of the document is located):

The Notice of Intent (NoI) for Federal Register publication is the method to launch the Supplemental RMP and its EIS, and invite public comment, thereby re-initiating the planning process after an internal review during the past few months. After scoping and further coordination with Cooperating Agencies and other stakeholders, a Supplemental Draft RMP/EIS would be published for public comment, followed by a PRMP/FEIS, and eventually two separate Records of Decision (tentative schedule in the Briefing Memo).

Is timing critical? Yes No

If yes, date the document must publish or other action must occur: 4/14/2017

What is driving the timing? Scheduled Event

What happens if the deadline is missed?

The timing or date is intended to advance this planning process in a timely manner to serve the public so the Resource Management Plan can be continued with new scoping based on recently emerging issues.

Background: *[Briefly provide any background information, in understandable language, that will help a reader quickly understand what the document is trying to do and why, along with additional information that is useful. Assume the reader knows little about the subject matter. Minimize use of acronyms or abbreviations and do not use them at all unless they are clearly defined. Is the document a high-profile, litigated matter?]*

As indicated in the Notice of Intent, the scope of the Supplemental Draft Resource Management Plan (and its associated Environmental Impact Statement) is limited to the specific issues of solar energy zones and solar development, Areas of Critical Environmental Concern, lands with wilderness characteristics, land tenure adjustments (i.e., land disposals), and socio-economics within the Southern Nevada District planning area (maps in the Briefing Memo). For the geographic area of Gold Butte National Monument (296,937 acres), the scope will consider a broad range of planning issues and criteria, such as recreational access, permitting, and resource protection, as consistent with the designating Proclamation (December 2016) and not addressed in the initial plan.

The purpose of the supplemental planning process is to incorporate substantive comments received since the initial Draft plan was made available in October 2014, and to incorporate new information, field data, and changing circumstances, such as recent Federal land transfers, designation of Gold Butte National Monument, and the BLM Final Solar and Wind Rule (November 2016). Comments already received will continue to be considered for the Supplemental Draft plan.

Issues: *[Controversial? What are the significant issues, who will care, and how strongly will they care?]*

The Las Vegas metro area (population 2.3 million) is situated in the center of the planning area, accentuating the intensive, strong public interest in BLM activities and management there. Positions of interested parties are described in the Briefing Memo.

Communications:

BLM will produce standard news releases highlighting the content of the Notice of Intent. Public outreach strategies will include standard and required methods, such as distribution of news releases and website posting, and 4 or 5 public meetings throughout the southern Nevada region, as part of the formal scoping process. The BLM will perform outreach with the following groups: Cooperating agencies, Mojave Southern Great Basin Resource Advisory Council, Nevada Congressional delegation, Native American Tribes and individual members, Local media, and General public.

Is there an information collection associated with this document? Yes No

If yes, does it have a currently approved OMB Control Number? Yes No

OMB Control Number(s): [Click here](#) to enter OMB Control Number.

Does the document require a new OMB Control Number or a renewal of an existing approval?

If a new number or renewal is required, what is the current status? [Click here](#) to explain status.

If a regulatory action, has it been on a 90-Day List for the current stage? Yes No

If yes, on which 90-Day List did it first appear at the current stage?

[Click here](#) to enter response.

Did OIRA provide comments or change the significance? Yes No

If yes, summarize comments and resolution.

[Click here](#) to summarize OIRA comments and DOI response.

This approval is to go to the Federal Register for publication. OIRA for review.

Primary Contact:

Name: John F. Ruhs, Nevada State Director (and David Pritchett, NVSO Planning Coordinator)

Phone: 775-861-6590 Ruhs (775-861-6645 Pritchett)

Email: jruhs@blm.gov (dpritchett@blm.gov)

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[LLNV930000.L16100000.PN0000; 241A; MO#]

**Notice of Intent to Prepare a Supplement to the Draft Resource Management Plan
and Associated Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Southern Nevada
District Planning Area, comprising the Las Vegas and Pahrump Field Offices and
Gold Butte National Monument**

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended (NEPA), and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, as amended, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Southern Nevada District Office intends to prepare a Supplement to the Draft Resource Management Plan (RMP) and an associated Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Southern Nevada District Planning Area, which encompasses the Las Vegas Field Office, the Pahrump Field Office, and the Gold Butte National Monument, and by this notice is announcing the beginning of the supplemental scoping process to solicit public comments and identify issues specific to solar energy zones and solar development, Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs), lands with wilderness characteristics, land tenure adjustments (i.e., land disposals), and socio-economics. By this notice the BLM also is soliciting public comments on issues specific to Gold Butte National Monument, which was designated by Presidential Proclamation on December 28, 2016. The BLM is

preparing this Supplement to the Draft RMP/EIS—initially made available for public comment on October 10, 2014—to address the specific issues listed above. Once completed, this RMP revision will replace the existing 1998 Las Vegas RMP.

DATES: This notice initiates the public scoping process for the Supplemental Draft RMP and associated Supplemental Draft EIS. Comments on issues may be submitted in writing until [INSERT DATE 60+ DAYS AFTER THE DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER]. The date(s) and location(s) of any scoping meetings will be announced at least 15 days in advance through local media, newspapers and the BLM website at: <http://tinyurl.com/qzvaht7>. In order to be included in the Supplemental Draft RMP/EIS, all comments must be received prior to the close of the 60-day scoping period or 15 days after the last public meeting, whichever is later. We will provide additional opportunities for public participation upon publication of the Supplemental Draft RMP/EIS.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments on the specific issues and planning criteria related to the Southern Nevada District Planning Area Supplemental Draft RMP/EIS by any of the following methods:

- Website: <http://tinyurl.com/qzvaht7>
- Email: sndo_rmp_revision@blm.gov
- Fax: 702-515-5023
- Mail: BLM-RMP Revision, 4701 N. Torrey Pines Drive, Las Vegas NV 89130

Documents pertinent to this proposal may be examined at the Southern Nevada District Office, Las Vegas, NV.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Lee Kirk, RMP Team Lead, telephone 702-501-5026; address BLM-RMP Revision, 4701 N. Torrey Pines Drive, Las Vegas, NV 89130; email sndo_rmp_revision@blm.gov. Contact Mr. Lee Kirk to add your name to our mailing list. Persons who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Relay Service (FRS) at 1-800-877-8339 to contact the above individual during normal business hours. FRS is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to leave a message or question with the above individual. You will receive a reply during normal business hours.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: This document provides notice that the BLM Southern Nevada District Office intends to prepare a Supplemental Draft RMP with an associated Supplemental Draft EIS for the Southern Nevada District Planning Area, which encompasses the Las Vegas Field Office, the Pahrump Field Office, and the Gold Butte National Monument. This notice announces the beginning of the supplemental scoping process by which the BLM requests public input on solar energy zones and solar development, ACECs, lands with wilderness characteristics, land tenure adjustments (i.e., land disposals), and socio-economics. Additionally, this supplemental scoping process will gather input on planning issues relating to implementing the Presidential Proclamation designating the Gold Butte National Monument. The planning area is located in Clark and Nye Counties, Nevada, and encompasses approximately 3.0 million acres of public land. The Planning Area does not include: private lands, State lands, Indian reservations, Federal lands not administered by the BLM, Nellis Test and Training Range (U.S. Air Force), or lands addressed in the Red Rock Canyon National

Conservation Area RMP (2005) and the Sloan Canyon National Conservation Area RMP (2006).

The purpose of the supplemental public scoping process is to incorporate substantive comments received since the initial Draft RMP/EIS was made available in 2014 for public and cooperating agency review, and to incorporate new information, field data, and changing circumstances, such as recent Federal land transfers, designation of the Gold Butte National Monument, and the BLM final rule on competitive processes, terms, and conditions for leasing public lands for solar and wind energy development (81 FR 92122, December 19, 2016). Comments previously received on the initial Draft RMP/EIS will continue to be considered for the Supplemental Draft RMP/EIS. Relevant issues that will influence the scope of the environmental analysis, including alternatives, and guide the planning process include the specific planning issues indicated above, as have been identified by BLM personnel; the Presidential Proclamation; Federal, State, and local agencies; Tribes; and other stakeholders. The BLM will also consider identifying opportunities to apply hierarchical mitigation strategies for regional and compensatory mitigation and identify areas appropriate to apply landscape-level conservation and management actions to achieve regional mitigation objectives (e.g. ACECs, priority habitat, etc.).

Preliminary planning criteria include, but are not limited to, those in the initial Draft RMP/EIS (made available October 10, 2014) and the Presidential Proclamation designating Gold Butte National Monument (December 28, 2016), in addition to: cultural resources, tribal values, vegetation resources, wild horse and burros, social and economic values, climate change, special areas (e.g., Gold Butte National Monument and ACECs),

visual resources, lands and realty, outdoor recreation, livestock grazing, minerals, paleontological resources, research, wildland fire, and military uses. Preliminary planning criteria will conform to 43 CFR 1610.4-2.

You may submit comments on issues and planning criteria in writing to the BLM at any public scoping meeting, or you may submit them to the BLM using one of the methods listed in the “ADDRESSES” section above. To be most helpful, you should submit comments by the close of the 60-day scoping period or within 15 days after the last public meeting, whichever is later. Before including your address, phone number, email address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment – including your personal identifying information – may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so. The BLM will evaluate identified issues to be addressed in the Supplemental Draft RMP/EIS, and will place them into one of three categories:

1. Issues to be resolved in the RMP/EIS;
2. Issues to be resolved through policy or administrative action; or
3. Issues beyond the scope of this RMP/EIS.

The BLM will provide an explanation in the Supplemental Draft RMP/EIS as to why an issue was placed in category two or three. The public is also encouraged to help identify any management questions and concerns that should be addressed in the Supplemental Draft RMP/EIS. The BLM will work collaboratively with interested parties to identify the management decisions that are best suited to local, regional, and national needs and concerns.

The BLM will utilize and coordinate the NEPA scoping process to help fulfill the public involvement process under the National Historic Preservation Act (54 U.S.C. 306108) as provided in 36 CFR 800.2(d)(3). The information about historic and cultural resources within the area potentially affected by the proposed action will assist the BLM in identifying and evaluating impacts to such resources.

The BLM will consult with Indian tribes on a government-to-government basis in accordance with Executive Order 13175 and other policies. Tribal concerns, including impacts on Indian trust assets and potential impacts to cultural resources, will be given due consideration. Federal, State, and local agencies, along with tribes and other stakeholders that may be interested in or affected by the proposed action that the BLM is evaluating, are invited to participate in the scoping process and, if eligible, may request or be requested by the BLM to participate in the development of the environmental analysis as a cooperating agency.

The BLM will use an interdisciplinary approach to develop the Supplemental Draft RMP/EIS in order to consider the variety of resource issues and concerns identified. Specialists with expertise in the following disciplines will be involved in the planning and NEPA process: renewable energy, wilderness, socioeconomic, rangeland management, minerals and geology, outdoor recreation, archaeology, paleontology, wildlife and fisheries, lands and realty, hydrogeology, soils, law enforcement, fire management planning.

AUTHORITY: 40 CFR 1501.7, 43 CFR 1610.2,

John F. Ruhs
State Director, Nevada

**INFORMATION / BRIEFING MEMORANDUM
FOR THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY – LAND AND MINERALS MANAGEMENT**

DATE: **March 31, 2017**

FROM: Mike Nedd, Acting Director – Bureau of Land Management
John F. Ruhs, Nevada State Director

SUBJECT: Notice of Intent for Supplemental Draft Resource Management Plan covering the Southern Nevada District planning area, including Gold Butte National Monument

The purpose of this memo is to provide a status update on the subject Notice of Intent and to confirm approval for its publication in the Federal Register to re-initiate this Resource Management Plan (RMP) covering 3.0 million acres in southern Nevada.

KEY FACTS

Jobs: BLM Management decisions --such as permits, available recreational activities, or land disposals-- arising out of the land use planning process may affect numerous jobs in the region, especially by providing certainty for business decisions and local government planning. The socio-economic impact analysis in the RMP will address the effects on regional jobs; however, detailed analyses would be conducted through subsequent review, such as a project-specific Environmental Assessment as required under NEPA.

Stakeholder Positions: Discussed below under the descriptions of *Prominent Issues and Positions of Interested Parties*.

Public Lands Affected: Approximately 3.0 million acres located in Clark County and the southern portion of Nye County (see maps attached and Background below).

BACKGROUND

The Resource Management Plan (RMP) covering the BLM Southern Nevada District Planning Area is under revision from its prior version completed in 1998, which is still the currently applicable RMP. The planning decision area (BLM public lands covered by the RMP) encompasses approximately 3.0 million acres, located in Clark County and the southern portion of Nye County (see map attached). The Las Vegas metro area (population 2.3 million) is situated in the center of the planning area, accentuating the intensive public interest in BLM activities and management there.

The RMP does not cover Red Rock Canyon and Sloan Canyon National Conservation Areas or the lands withdrawn for Nellis Air Force Base, Test and Training Range. The full planning area for the ongoing RMP does not include: private lands, State lands, Indian reservations, Federal lands not administered by the BLM, Nellis Test and Training Range (U.S. Air Force), or lands

addressed in the Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area RMP (2005) and the Sloan Canyon National Conservation Area RMP (2006).

The RMP process underway resides between the public Draft and the Administrative Final RMP phases. The Proposed RMP (PRMP) and integrated Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) that recently has been under development was paused for internal review in July 2016. This procedural pause was based upon concerns and important issues that have been raised by our many partners, stakeholders, and the public affected by this RMP (see Discussion below). During the latter half of 2016, the Nevada State Office has collaborated with the Planning Division (WO-210) and the Solicitors on this internal review, and all have determined now that a Supplemental Draft RMP/EIS, with a new 60-day public scoping period, would be the best approach to incorporate and update the specific planning issues.

Gold Butte National Monument & Coordination with NLCS Division

These planning issues for the Supplemental Draft RMP/EIS also include the recent designation of Gold Butte National Monument (GBNM) and particular management actions that the designation entails for recreational access, permitting, and resource protection. The GBNM portion of the planning area (see attached map) will be analyzed under the Special Designations section of the RMP, consistent with standard organization of RMP documents. GBNM covers 296,937 acres and was designated via Presidential Proclamation on December 28, 2016. On February 9, the BLM Southern Nevada District Office conducted a public information meeting about GBNM, held at Mesquite City Hall with about 180 participants and extensive news coverage.

As required under Manual 6620, the Division of National Lands Conservation System (NLCS, WO-410) was consulted about the planning approach for GBNM. During a 10-party call held on March 22, 2017, the NLCS Deputy Division Chief confirmed and agreed then that the planning approach for GBNM could be incorporated into single RMP for the Southern Nevada District planning area, with separate Records of Decision published later for GBNM and the remainder of the planning area. Because GBNM now exists as a major designation and new substantive information now inserted into the ongoing planning process, the Supplemental RMP approach is warranted whether GBNM is included or excluded from the surrounding RMP for the Southern Nevada planning area.

References

- Draft RMP, public documents in ePlanning, Land Use Register
https://eplanning.blm.gov/epl_front_office/eplanning/planAndProjectSite.do?methodName=renderDefaultPlanOrProjectSite&projectId=2900
- Gold Butte National Monument webpage, including a map and the designating Proclamation
https://www.blm.gov/programs/national_conservation_lands/national_monuments/nevada

DISCUSSION

Supplemental Draft RMP/EIS

As indicated in the Notice of Intent, the scope of the Supplemental Draft RMP/EIS is limited to the specific issues of: solar energy zones and solar development, Areas of Critical Environmental

Concern (ACECs), lands with wilderness characteristics, land tenure adjustments (i.e., land disposals), and socio-economics within the Southern Nevada District planning area, location described as in Background section above. For the geographic area of Gold Butte National Monument (296,937 acres), the scope will consider a broad range of planning issues and criteria, such as recreational access, permitting, and resource protection, and as consistent with the designating Proclamation.

The purpose of the supplemental public scoping process is to incorporate substantive comments received since the initial Draft RMP/EIS was made available in October 2014 for public and cooperating agency review, and to incorporate new information, field data, and changing circumstances, such as recent Federal land transfers, designation of Gold Butte National Monument, and the BLM Final Solar and Wind Rule (November 10, 2016). Comments already received on the initial Draft RMP/EIS have been analyzed and will continue to be considered for the Supplemental Draft RMP/EIS, and such consideration will be highlighted prominently during upcoming public scoping meetings and other outreach.

Cooperating Agencies

Cooperating Agencies that participated actively in the initial Draft RMP in 2014-2015, and subsequent review of the PRMP/FEIS in 2016, include: 5 municipalities (all of them in the planning area), both counties (Clark and Nye), 1 tribe (Moapa Band of Piutes), 3 State agencies (including Governor's Office), and 8 Federal agencies (including Nellis Air Force Base and several Interior bureaus). Thirteen tribal governments or related groups also were consulted or contacted, in addition to the regional BLM Resource Advisory Council (Mo-So RAC).

During late 2015 and early 2016, many of these Cooperating Agencies (particularly local governments) provided additional input and written comments as BLM crafted the PRMP of potential management decisions. Substantive comments from this recent input informed us on the need for the Supplemental RMP, especially on socio-economics and land tenure adjustments. All of the Cooperating Agencies will be re-engaged as the RMP advances. Focused outreach to City of Mesquite and Virgin Valley Water District (a new Cooperating Agency) also will occur, as these agencies serve the area immediately north of Gold Butte National Monument.

Prominent Issues and Positions of Interested Parties

Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC): The Proposed RMP identifies 37 ACECs (retain 21 existing and establish 17 new) that were nominated internally and externally. To address landscape planning continuity with ACECs and potential edge-mapping issues across the border in California, the PRMP/FEIS will include an additional map exhibit that depicts planning continuity with the contiguous Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan (DRECP), recently completed by BLM in September 2016. Depending on the stakeholder perspective, designation of ACECs may allow for additional protection of natural resources (mainly sensitive species or cultural sites) or be considered a hindrance to energy development, recreation, rights-of-ways, and/or lands for disposal.

Land Disposals: The current Proposed RMP identifies 118,466 acres for disposal, of which 59,174 acres are legislatively designated or required. The lands identified for disposal have been

reduced in the Proposed RMP from the No-Action and Preferred Alternatives of the Draft RMP, mainly because of concerns regarding the possible adverse effects to groundwater-dependent species, such as the endangered Devils Hole Pupfish and Moapa Dace. The two County governments have expressed concern that the reduction in areas for disposal would limit future urban development opportunities unless the RMP were amended in future years to allow for additional or different land disposal areas. For the mainly Nye County portion of the RMP planning area, a groundwater model is being prepared by US Geological Survey (<http://nevada.usgs.gov/water/studyareas/samm.htm>), with internal and scientific peer review now completed and a final report by USGS anticipated for publication in late spring 2017, which is expected to inform substantially on the Supplemental RMP. The Clark County portion of the planning area is largely covered by other groundwater models approved by the Nevada State Engineer, the agency with jurisdiction over water resources.

Lands with Wilderness Characteristics: The Draft RMP/EIS (published late 2014) identified 21 areas or units (242,214 acres total) that possess wilderness character, based upon field work completed during 2010-2011 and largely focusing on units that were nominated then by public advocacy organizations. Public comments subsequently received on the Draft RMP/EIS in spring 2015 correctly indicated that BLM had not completed a comprehensive wilderness character inventory for the entire RMP planning area, to be consistent with BLM Manual 6310. In response to these substantive public comments, additional inventory field work (not including the GBNM area) was completed in summer 2015, which identified a total of 41 units (670,958 acres total) of lands with wilderness character. For the Proposed RMP, nine of these units (208,021 acres) are identified to be managed to maintain wilderness characteristics, 11 units (116,578 acres) are to be managed with other resources having priority over wilderness characteristics due to other statutory requirements, and 21 units (429,886 acres) are identified in the Proposed RMP to be managed commensurate with other resource values to protect wilderness characteristics, such as ACECs or other overlapping designations. Depending on the stakeholder perspective, these land use decisions may allow for protection of wilderness character or be considered a hindrance to mineral and renewable energy development, recreation, rights-of-way, and/or lands for disposal.

Renewable Energy: In addition to the two existing Solar Energy Zones (SEZ) identified in the Solar Energy Development Programmatic EIS (2012), which amended the currently applicable RMP (1998), the Proposed RMP identifies three additional SEZs. The PRMP considered the 2015 solar energy market analysis by National Renewable Energy Laboratory. With input from the BLM Zonal Economist, the Proposed RMP also is incorporating current socio-economic conditions discussed with local Cooperating Agencies. Public workshops conducted by BLM to address solar energy issues are anticipated to be held in mid 2017 as focused discussions during the scoping meetings. Positions of stakeholder groups are outlined below.

- **Environmental Groups.** Some organizations have expressed concerns that the identification protocols in the Solar Development PEIS (2012) for identifying new SEZs were not followed and that the Draft RMP/EIS did not provide sufficient NEPA analysis of the resource impacts of the alternatives.
- **Solar Industry.** Some industry groups have also expressed concerns that the new proposed SEZs were located without industry input and would be cost prohibitive, and that the proposed SEZs did not provide for connectivity to nearby electric transmission

corridors. Additionally, the number of acres for exclusion has increased and the solar variance areas have decreased from the Solar Development PEIS (2012) and may be perceived by industry as limiting the opportunity for development.

- **Tribal Governments.** During early January 2017, a concept was proposed via BLM Washington Office where Moapa tribal lands also could be addressed in the Supplemental RMP concerning solar energy issues. That approach may be feasible considering the nexus to electric transmission and solar development on the surrounding BLM lands. However, Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) would remain under NEPA as the Lead Federal Agency for any specific project on Moapa tribal lands but BIA later could adopt or tier off the FEIS prepared by BLM.

Other Issues:

- **Travel and Transportation.** The PRMP changes off-highway vehicle (OHV) allocations from “Limited to existing roads, trails, and dry washes” to “Limited to designated routes”. These proposed allocations may be perceived by the public as a way to restrict access to public lands, and were a prominent topic of the public comments from 2015 and earlier. Consistent with updated policy (Manual 1626), travel management will be completed as an implementation-level plan once the RMP is complete. The travel management plan for the area of Gold Butte National Monument and the adjacent ACEC, though, already is complete since 2008 and will expedite further planning for the GBNM area.
- **Recreational Target Shooting Closure.** The PRMP features an additional 17,824 acres of closure area within the proposed Logandale Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA) to protect persons and property. This proposed closure was coordinated with the national Shooting Sports Roundtable group. Additional comments earlier stated a preference for no shooting closures and wanted the BLM to find other means to control shooting, such as developing specific recreational shooting sites.
- **Fluid Minerals.** Compared with the Preferred Alternative in the Draft RMP, the Proposed RMP (the latest internal draft version) includes additional areas open to fluid minerals leasing with stipulations for No Surface Occupancy. Southern Nevada, however, shows minimal potential for oil and gas development.

NEXT STEPS

The Notice of Intent (NoI) for Federal Register publication is the method to launch the Supplemental RMP and its EIS, and invite public comment, thereby re-initiating the planning process. After scoping and further coordination with Cooperating Agencies and other stakeholders, a Supplemental Draft RMP/EIS would be published for public comment, followed by a PRMP/FEIS, and eventually two separate Records of Decision (tentative schedule below).

Upon approval of the Federal Register publication, we will estimate dates and determine venues for 4 or 5 public scoping meetings to be held throughout the planning area, including a meeting in Mesquite (closest city and gateway community) to highlight issues most pertinent to GBNM.

Status & Schedule

▪ Public Scoping and initial Notice of Intent	Jan. 2010
▪ Initial Draft RMP and Notice of Availability	Oct. 2014
▪ Initial Public Comment Period Ended (150 days)	Mar. 2015
▪ Admin. Draft Alternatives for PRMP presented to Cooperating Agencies	May 2016
▪ Admin. Draft Alternatives for PRMP reviewed by Nevada State Office	June 2016
▪ RMP process paused for internal review	July 2016
▪ <i>Supplemental Public Scoping and NoI (60-day comment period begins)</i>	<i>when published</i>
▪ Admin. version, Supplemental Draft RMP/EIS, potential completion	Feb. 2018
▪ Public version, Supplemental Draft RMP/EIS, potential Notice of Availability	April 2018
▪ Admin. Draft PRMP/FEIS potential completion	Sep. 2018
▪ PRMP/FEIS, potential review by Washington Office	Sep. 2018
▪ PRMP/FEIS potential Notice of Availability and start Protest Period	Nov. 2018
▪ Potential Record of Decision, covering Las Vegas and Pahrump Field Offices	FY19
▪ Potential Record of Decision, covering Gold Butte National Monument	FY20

ATTACHMENTS

- Map of Southern Nevada District planning area
- Map of Gold Butte National Monument



Southern Nevada District Office

Las Vegas Field Office - Pahrump Field Office
RMP Revision

Planning Area
Map 1.4 - 1

Legend

- City Location
- SNDO RMP Planning Area
- Lake Mead

- National Monument
- National Conservation Area
- BLM Wilderness

Land Status

- Bureau of Indian Affairs
- Bureau of Land Management
- Bureau of Reclamation
- Department of Defense
- Department of Energy
- Fish and Wildlife Service
- Forest Service
- National Park Service
- Nevada State
- Local Government
- Private



No Warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management as to the accuracy, reliability, or completeness of these data for individual use or aggregate use with other data.



